



# News from White Haven

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, dedicated to Civil War General and 18th President Ulysses S. Grant and his wife, Julia Dent Grant, is located in south St. Louis County, Missouri.

News from White Haven is a quarterly publication of Ulysses S. Grant NHS. It is also available online by visiting [www.nps.gov/ulsg/](http://www.nps.gov/ulsg/).

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## Park Hours

We are open daily from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., with tours of White Haven offered from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Please call ahead for information on special programs and events.

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

## School Programs Bring History to Kids



Park Guide David Newmann leads students from Concord Elementary School in a Civil War drilling and marching exercise. This is just one of the park's many school programs.

Spring is slowly but surely making its way to St. Louis. The saucer magnolias are in bloom, the Cardinals opened the baseball season, and school groups are back at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. We welcome school groups all year round, but as the school year winds down, we see the number of field trips increase.

We have curriculum-based programs for K-12 students in traditional school and homeschool settings. These programs focus on the Civil War, slavery, freedom, and reconstruction, incorporating elements like critical thinking, map reading, character

education, hands-on activities, and reading comprehension. We recently developed a new museum scavenger hunt to help even the youngest students feel comfortable exploring a museum. Gifted first through fifth graders from nearby Concord Elementary School were the first school group to try the scavenger hunt on March 13. We look forward to other school groups this spring discovering new things about Ulysses and Julia Grant in our museum with the scavenger hunt.

If you would like to make a reservation for a school group, please call Pam Sanfilippo at 314-842-1867 x224.

# Grant at Vicksburg: Turning Point of the Civil War

Despite two years of bloody struggle, the Civil War showed no signs of ending in June 1863. In the Western theater, strategy still centered upon control of the Mississippi River. President Abraham Lincoln realized that total command of the river would cut the Confederacy in two as well as offer passage of Federal troops and supplies deep into the South. He called the Confederate stronghold of Vicksburg “the key,” and believed that “the war can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket.”

Ulysses S. Grant was charged with clearing the Mississippi of Confederate resistance, and Vicksburg proved to be the greatest obstacle. Initially, Grant planned to take the city by maneuver and direct assault. He marched troops at and around Vicksburg’s defense from various directions, and coordinated a naval assault to bombard the city. But the strong natural position of the town upon a bluff as well as the swampy terrain nearby thwarted these efforts. Grant finally settled on a siege, ringing the city with his



This sketch by A. E. Mathews, “The Siege of Vicksburg, The Fight in the Crater of Fort Hill, after the explosion, June 25 63,” shows General Logan’s division and General McPherson’s Army Corps. Image courtesy of Library of Congress.

army and then bombarding it daily with cannon. It became a test of endurance for the Confederate defenders.

On Independence Day, July 4, 1863, President Lincoln received two startling pieces of news: Confederate General Robert E. Lee’s famed Army of Northern Virginia had been defeated in a Pennsylvania town called Gettysburg, and General Grant had captured Vicksburg. These events changed the course of the war.

Grant later commented, “The capture of Vicksburg has

proved a bigger thing than I supposed it would.” It was an impressive victory, with the capture of over 30,000 Confederate troops and 50,000 small arms. It severed the transport of Confederate supplies and troops from Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. It also catapulted Grant into the public eye. As Captain Ira Miltmoore declared, “The Mississippi River is opened, and General Grant is to be our next President. This observation eventually proved prophetic with Grant’s election to the presidency in 1868.

## Jewish Soldiers of the Civil War Lecture Planned for June 2

Join Ulysses S. Grant NHS on June 2 for a special talk, “Jewish Soldiers in the Civil War,” presented by Robert Cohn. Cohn, a St. Louis native, was the chief editor of the St. Louis Jewish Light from 1969 until his semi-retirement

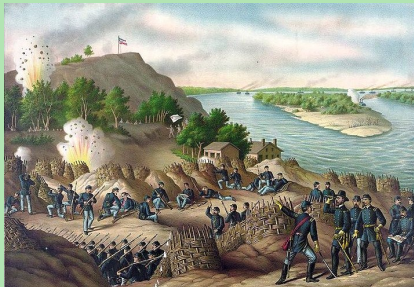
in 2004. He serves as the Jewish Light’s editor-in-chief emeritus and is a frequent contributor to the newspaper and its online presence. His talk will start at 2 p.m. in the Ulysses S. Grant NHS theater, and will be followed by a

question and answer session. Reservations are required. Reservations cost \$10 and include the lecture and a \$10 credit in the park sales area (good on that day only). Call 314-842-1867 x230 for reservations after May 6.



## Spotlight on the Park: Kurz and Allison Print

In the 1880s, Civil War nostalgia was a big business. In Chicago, a pair of chromolithographers named Louis Kurz and Alexander Allison capitalized on this sentiment, publishing a series of 36 prints depicting Civil War battles.



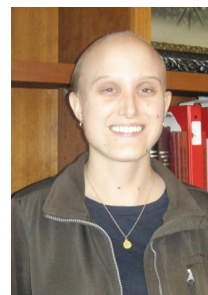
Kurz and Allison's "Siege of Vicksburg" portrays an idealized version of the events at Vicksburg in 1863.

Local collector James Schiele donated a Kurz and Allison chromolithograph of the siege of Vicksburg to Ulysses S. Grant NHS in 2010. Mr. Schiele's complete collection of original Kurz and Allison prints is part of the James E. and Joan Singer Schiele Print Collection at Washington University's Olin Library.

Visitors will be able to see the Kurz and Allison print at Ulysses S. Grant NHS as part of a new special exhibit commemorating the 150th anniversary of the siege of Vicksburg. The exhibit, which opens May 1, will feature park collections as well as the private collections of ranger Terry Orr and volunteer Bob Champlin.

## Meet the Staff: New Volunteer Julia Peters

We are pleased to welcome new volunteer Julia Peters to the Ulysses S. Grant team. She has been working with curator Karen Maxville two days a week since February. Julia is from the St. Louis area — she is a 2008 graduate of Lindbergh High School, and holds an Associates' degree from St. Louis Community College and a Bachelor's degree in history from Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri. Julia's work with Karen has been mostly in curatorial duties. She has been trained in monitoring environmental controls for museum pieces on display and for objects in storage. She is learning about the effects of



Julia Peters

humidity, UV, temperature, lighting and other elements on objects and structures.

Julia's goal is to work in museums and archives in the National Park Service. She is excited to be volunteering at Grant as she gains more skills and experience. Her sister Shawn was a park guide here as well. Julia says, "[Shawn's] enthusiasm influenced my decision to volunteer and so far it has been very rewarding." We are glad to have Julia working with us as well.

## Kids' Corner: Junior Ranger Day 2013

Did you know that the National Park Service celebrates National Park Week every year? And did you know that parks across the country have special events for kids during National Park Week on a day called Junior Ranger Day? And did you know that this year, the theme of Junior Ranger Day is "Did You Know"?

Join Ulysses S. Grant NHS on Saturday, April 27, for its annual Junior Ranger Day celebration. (Did you know that April 27 is also Ulysses S. Grant's birthday?) Special "Did You Know" activities will introduce kids ages 5-14 to interesting facts about Grant, his victory at Vicksburg in July 1863, one-room schoolhouses,



and changes to our money.

This free event will start at 10 a.m. and activities will be going on all day, with the last series of activities starting at 2 p.m. Kids of all ages are welcome, but activities are aimed at those between 5 and 14. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Reservations are not necessary for groups of ten people or under. Please call the park at 314-842-1867 x230 for more information.



**Ulysses S. Grant NHS**  
**7400 Grant Road**  
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## Upcoming Events

- April 27: Junior Ranger Day at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site will feature activities for children of all ages with the theme of “Did You Know?” about Grant and the Civil War. Free.
- June 2: “Jewish Soldiers in the Civil War,” Lecture by Robert Cohn, editor-in-chief emeritus of the St. Louis Jewish Light. \$10 reservation fee; call 314-842-1867 x230.
- June 29: Vicksburg commemoration, 2 p.m. A special exhibit, a Scout parade, and Civil War reenactors will bring to life Grant’s victory at Vicksburg. Free.
- July 20: Grant Death Remembrance Day, 10 a.m. ceremony and wreath-laying. Free.
- August 9-10: An Evening at White Haven, 7 p.m. Living history characters and special presentations will introduce visitors to Civil War-era St. Louis in different and interesting ways.

## Did you know?

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site has become a polling place. In keeping with President Grant’s endorsement of the 15th Amendment to the Constitution that expanded voting rights to African American men, voters in the local community will now

exercise their suffrage rights at the historic site in the classroom. The St. Louis County Election Commission has combined two former polling places into one due partially to concerns for school safety in the previous locations. The new combined polling place works well, and

the first election at the site was held on April 2. Over 480 local citizens visited the site to vote. On election days, the Visitor Center will be open during voting hours, 6:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., for voting purposes. Tours of the home will remain on the regular half-hour schedule.